Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ALGIER 00262 031039Z

22
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 ACDA-05 OMB-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02 ORM-02 AID-05

SAM-01 /102 W
---------- 024542
R 021705Z FEB 76
FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3773
INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 0262

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MPS, PFOR, AG, MO, MR, SP, SS
SUBJECT: SAHARA: AMGALA, ARAB EMISSARIES, SPANISH "PROGRESSIVE"
DELEGATION, MILITIA ACTIVATED

REF: ALGIERS 0247

1. SUMMARY: PERHAPS IN RESPONSE TO REPORTS THAT ALGERIAN FORCE AT AMGALA WIPED OUT, MEDIA HERE HAVE MADE SEEMINGLY WILD CLAIMS OF MOROCCAN AND MAURITANIAN CASUALTIES. NO DISCERNIBLE RESULTS FROM VISITS OF SEVEN ARAB EMISSARIES. MILITIA IN WESTERN ALGERIA APPARENTLY BEING ACTIVATED. END SUMMARY.

2. AMGALA: EVIDENTLY STUNG BY REPORTS THAT ALGERIAN ARMY UNIT AT AMGALA HAD BEEN WIPED OUT, MEDIA HERE HAVE CLAIMED THAT THIS FORCE, ALTHOUGH HEAVILY OUTGUNNED BY MOROCCANS, RETURNED TO BASE IN GOOD ORDER LEAVING BEHIND 400 DEAD MOROCCAN SOLDIERS. "HAD ALGERIA WISHED TO STRIKE MOROCCO," FLN DAILY EL MOUDJAHID EDITORIALIZES
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 ALGIER 00262 031039Z

FEB. 2, "SHE WOULD HAVE USED OTHER MEANS AND OTHER MORE

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

EFFICIENT ARMS. SHE WOULD NOT HAVE LAUNCHED ATTACK IN
WESTERN SAHARA BUT IN OTHER MUCH MORE SENSITIVE REGIONS."

3. LATEST POLISARIO COMMUNIQUE CLAIMS THAT 425
MOROCCANS AND MAURITANIANS HAVE BEEN KILLED AND 180
CAPTURED SINCE MOROCCANS BEGAN ATTACKING REFUGEE CAMPS
JAN. 18. COMMUNIQUE ALSO ASSERTS THAT SEVEN MOROCCAN
AND MAURITANIAN AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN DOWNED, AND LATER
PRESS REPORT, CITING PRESS SOURCES IN CANARY ISLANDS,
CLAIMS THAT AN ADDITIONAL FOUR PLANES, INCLUDING TWO
F-5S, FAILED TO RETURN TO EL AYOUN AND ARE BELIEVED
SHOT DOWN. POLISARIO COMMUNIQUE RENEWS ATROCITY CHARGES
AGAINST MOROCCANS, CLAIMING THAT 100 WOMEN AND 140
CHILDREN BETWEEN ONE AND TWELVE YEARS OF AGE WERE
SLAUGHTERED PUBLICLY AFTER MOROCCANS FAILED TO BREAK
"SEIGE" OF HAWZA, FARSIYA, AND JDERIYA.

4. ANTI-MOROCCAN PROPAGANDA: PERHAPS TO COMPENSATE
FOR ENDING OF FIRST EPISODE OF " DRUGSTHRONE" CARTOON
STRIP PARODYING KING HASSAN, MEDIA INTRODUCED NEW
PROPAGANDA THEME FEB 1-2. ALGERIAN PRESS SERVICE
(APS) COMMENTARY LIKENED TRIPARTITE MADRID ACCORD TO
AIX-LES-BAINS AGREEMENTS UNDER WHICH MOROCCO ACHIEVED
INDPENDENCE. IN APS' VIEW, BOTH AGREEMENTS AIMED AT
REPRESSION OF PEOPLE--FORMER AT SAHRAOUIS AND LATTER
AT MOROCCAN LIBERATION ARMY.

5. ARAB EMISSARIES: FOUR MORE ARAB EMISSARIES VISITED
ALGIERS OVER WEEKEND BRINGING TOTAL NUMBER OF SUCH
MISSIONS TO SEVEN. EMISSARIES WERE: EGYPTIAN
VICE PRESIDENT MUBARAK, TUNISIAN INTERIOR MINISTER
BELKHODJA, SAUDI FOREIGN MINISTER PRINCE SAUD, AND
SOUTH YEMENI SPECIAL ENVOY AL KHOUMEYRI. BOUMEDIENE
RECEIVED ALL THESE MEN WITH CONSIDERABLE CEREMONY.
ALL OF SEVEN WITH EXCEPTION OF JALLUD OF LIBYA WHO
STAYED TWO DAYS, SEEMED TO HAVE DEPARTED QUICKLY AND
ONLY MOST ANODYNE OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS HAVE BEEN ISSUED.

6. SPANISH "PROGRESSIVE" POLITICIANS ARRIVE: MEDIA
GOT GOOD MILEAGE FROM VISIT OVER WEEKEND OF DELEGATION
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OF "SPANISH PROGRESSIVE FORCES" LED BY COMMUNIST PARTY
SECRETARY GENERAL SANTIAGO CARILLO. OTHER MEMBERS OF
DELEGATION WERE CLAVOSERRER OF "INDEPENDENT GROUP,"
JOSE VIDAL BENETO, SECRETARY GENERAL OF DEMOCRATIC
JUNTA, AND ANTONIO CABRAL, DESCRIBED AS "RESPONSIBLE
FOR FOREIGN RELATIONS." DURING TALKS WITH FLN AND
POLISARIO, CARILLO CLAIMED THAT MADRID'S ATTITUDE
TOWARD SAHARA WAS "TREASON," THAT GOS HAD BROKEN ITS

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

WORD CONCERNING SAHARA, AND THAT PROBLEMS IN REGION
WERE FAULT OF MADRID. RESPONDING TO QUESTION
CONCERNING US-SPANISH SECURITY ACCORD, HE ASSERTED THAT
MADRID REGIME WAS PAWN IN HANDS OF IMPERIALISM AND THAT
SPAIN LACKS GOVERNMENT CAPABLE OF DEFENDING ITS
NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY.

7. MILITIA ACTIVITES: AMCONSUL ORAN HAS HEARD FROM
TWO SOURCES THAT MILITIA IN WESTERN ALGERIAN TOWNS
IS BEING ACTIVATED. "MILITIA" APPARENTLY COMPOSED OF
EX-RSISTANCE FIGHTERS RATHER THAN FORMALLY-COMMITTED
RESERVISTS. ARMS REPORTEDLY BEING ISSUED TO THESE MEN
BUT NATURE AND EXTENT OF THEIR DUTIES NOT KNOWN.
AMCONSUL ORAN SEES NO INDICATION OF SUCH ACTIVITY IN
ORAN ITSELF NOR DO WE HERE IN ALGIERS.

8. COMMENT: GOA-POLISARIO CLAIMS CONCERNING AMGALA
AND OTHER MILITARY ACTIVITY IN SAHARA APPEAR WILDEST
YET AND MAY BE SMOKESCREEN TO COVER SUBSTANTIAL SETBACK.
IN NEXT FEW DAYS, IT SHOULD BECOME CLEARER WHETHER
MOROCCAN FORCES HAVE SUCCEEDED IN DAMPING DOWN
ALGERIAN-POLISARIO MILITARY ACTIVITY OR HARRASSMENT OF MOROCCANS
ANDMARITANIANS IN TERRITORY WILL CONTINUE.

9. WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE AS YET THAT ANYTHING CONCRETE
HAS COME OF ARAB EMISSARIES' EFFORTS. SYRIAN DIPLOMAT,
IN DISCUSSING VISIT OF HAYDAR AND GENERAL CHIHABI, WAS
NOT OPTIMISTIC ALTHOUGH HE NOTED THAT NO INFORMATION
YET AVAILABLE ON SUBSTANCE OF TALKS. SYRIANS, HE SAID,
WHILE IDEOLOGICALLY SYMPATHETIC WITH ALGERIANS, HAVE
CONTINUING DEBT OF GRATITUDE TO MOROCCANS BECAUSE OF
MOROCCAN PARTICIPATION IN 1973 WAR. DIPLOMAT AGREED
THAT ALGERIANS HAD FORCED ARABS TO BEGIN THINKING ABOUT
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SAHARA PROBLEM ONCE MORE AND SAID THAT WHAT NEED
NOW WAS PAUSE AND DEESCALATION.LYNE

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